The Forrester Wave™: Customer Loyalty Solutions For Large Organizations, Q1 2016

The Eight Providers That Matter Most And How They Stack Up

by Emily Collins
January 4, 2016

Why Read This Report

In this Forrester Wave™ evaluation of customer loyalty solutions for large organizations, we identified the eight most significant players — Aimia, Bond Brand Loyalty (formerly Maritz Loyalty Marketing), Brierley+Partners, Comarch, Epsilon, ICF Olson 1to1, Kobie Marketing, and TIBCO Software — and researched, analyzed, and scored them. This report details our findings on how well these technology and services vendors fulfill our criteria and where they stand in relation to each other to help customer insights (CI) professionals select the right partner for their customer loyalty initiatives.

Key Takeaways

CI Pros Look For Providers With Differentiated, Reliable, And Technology-Enabled Solutions

The customer loyalty solution market is growing because more customer insights professionals see loyalty technology and services as a way to increase customer retention and engagement, as well as enrich customer relationships.

Six Vendors With Mature Offerings Lead The Pack For Large Organizations

Forrester’s research uncovered a market in which Brierley+Partners, Aimia, Kobie Marketing, Epsilon, Bond Brand Loyalty (formerly Maritz Loyalty Marketing), and ICF Olson 1to1 lead the pack. TIBCO Software and Comarch offer competitive options.

Leaders In This Space Will Push Client Loyalty Strategies To The Next Level

As legacy loyalty offerings become more commoditized, improved engagement, strategy, and customer experience (CX) capabilities will dictate which providers will lead the next evolution of loyalty solutions.
# The Forrester Wave™: Customer Loyalty Solutions For Large Organizations, Q1 2016

The Eight Providers That Matter Most And How They Stack Up

by Emily Collins
with Srividya Sridharan, Christian Austin, and Tyler Thurston
January 4, 2016

## Table Of Contents

2 Improving Customer Loyalty Is A Top Priority
2 The Loyalty Market Combats Commoditization
4 New Markets, Delivery Models, And Capabilities Will Drive Growth
5 Customer Loyalty Vendor Evaluation Overview
   Evaluation Criteria Target Loyalty Strategy, Management, And Marketing Capabilities
   Evaluated Vendors Meet Size And Feature Criteria
7 Leading Providers Aggressively Jockey For Position
9 Vendor Profiles
   Leaders
   Strong Performers
13 Supplemental Material

## Notes & Resources

Forrester conducted product and service evaluations in Q3 and Q4 2015 and interviewed and/or surveyed eight vendors and 36 user companies.

Related Research Documents

- Be A Loyalty Company, Not A Company With A Loyalty Program
- Navigate The Complex Customer Loyalty Ecosystem

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Improving Customer Loyalty Is A Top Priority

Customer relationships are now the only remaining source of competitive advantage, which makes earning customer loyalty mission-critical in the age of the customer.\(^1\) Our data shows that improving customer loyalty is likely to be a top marketing priority for 80% of decision-makers at large organizations in the next 12 months.\(^2\) As a result, they seek loyalty solutions that help companies identify and track customers, reward behavior, and drive deeper engagement and relationships. In fact, three-quarters of marketing decision-makers at large organizations that are using marketing automation tech indicated that they are planning to or have implemented customer loyalty technologies or services. This includes more than a quarter who are planning to expand or upgrade their solutions.\(^3\) Forward-thinking companies lean on these solutions to do more than simply manage rewards programs — instead they want to apply loyalty insights to improve customer experiences, branding, and even acquisition marketing.

The Loyalty Market Combats Commoditization

The loyalty market is mature, and the lines dividing various types of loyalty providers are blurring. Vendors that were traditionally considered service providers continue to productize and improve their technology platforms, and pure-play loyalty technology platform providers are shoring up their professional services offerings.\(^4\) Furthermore, structured loyalty capabilities like currency, rewards, and redemption management are now commoditized. Each of the leading vendors in this mature market offers similar features and functionality. And, conversations with clients reveal they are looking for holistic loyalty solutions — increasingly including service providers, agencies, and software-as-a-service (SaaS) technology platforms in the same request for proposal (RFP). As such, we now see a market with three main categories of providers that deliver loyalty-related technology, services, or a combination of both (see Figure 1):

- **End-to-end loyalty solutions for large, midsize, and small organizations.** These vendors offer purpose-built solutions for customer loyalty, with functionality to support a full range of loyalty requirements, including strategy development and program design, customer and member data management, operational support, measurement, and analytics. The breadth and depth of capabilities varies based on target market needs — for example, vendors targeting enterprises offer feature-rich solutions capable of supporting large and complex programs and integrations, whereas vendors targeting small organizations focus on simpler, plug-and-play solutions with a lower total cost of ownership. Example vendors include: Aimia, CrowdTwist, DataCandy, Epsilon, and Kobie Marketing. We do see some market overlap in solutions, especially among vendors that target large and midsize organizations. This report highlights the leading customer loyalty vendors for large organizations in the market.\(^5\)

- **Specialized loyalty solutions.** These vendors offer point solutions that focus on one piece of the loyalty value chain, such as program design or rewards fulfillment, are targeted to a specific vertical, or a larger solution of which loyalty is a key component. For example, points management
and rewards solutions that are embedded within point of sale (POS) solutions. They typically have resources — including products, services, sales, and/or account management — dedicated to customers who want loyalty-related solutions. Example vendors include: DBG Loyalty, LoyaltyOne, Points, rDialogue, and Welcome Real Time.

› **Complementary loyalty solutions.** The providers in this bucket offer solutions that are closely related to or enhance existing loyalty implementations. The solutions do not solely serve the loyalty market, but typically offer ancillary support through sophisticated campaign management mobile offers, deeper digital engagement, or member surveys. These vendors often establish partnerships with end-to-end solution providers or engage clients directly and include Adobe, SAP Hybris, SoHalo, T3, Vibes, and Walker.

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**FIGURE 1** Three Core Categories Of Providers Offer Loyalty And Loyalty-Related Technology And Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>End-to-end solutions</th>
<th>Specialized solutions</th>
<th>Complementary solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For large organizations:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Loyalty strategy:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marketing automation and analytics:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimia, Bond Brand Loyalty (formerly Maritz Loyalty Marketing), Brierley+Partners, Comarch, Epsilon, Kobie Marketing, ICF Olson 1to1, TIBCO Software</td>
<td>Hani/fin Loyalty, Lavender Communication, Lenati, LoyaltyOne, rDialogue, The LacekGroup, Walker Information</td>
<td>Adobe, IBM, Oracle, Salesforce, SAS, SAP Hybris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For midsize organizations:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Loyalty Technology:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Customer feedback management:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500friends, a Merkle Company, Aimia, Clutch, CrowdTwist, DataCandy, Deluxe, Inte Q Global, ICLP, Exchange Solutions</td>
<td>Oracle (Siebel), SAP CRM, Stellar Loyalty</td>
<td>Medallia, Forsee, Allegiance, Walker Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For small organizations:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Promotions and offers providers:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Digital experience and CI services:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewards and fulfillment providers:</strong></td>
<td><strong>POS and payments processors:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social and digital engagement:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vertical expertise:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marketing automation and analytics:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mobile:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paytronix, Amadeus, Coniq, Joingo, Meridian Enterprise Corporation</td>
<td>Adobe, IBM, Oracle, Salesforce, SAS, SAP Hybris</td>
<td>CodeBroker, Mobile RQ, Mocapay, Outspoken, SessionM, Urban Airship, Vibes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Referral and word of mouth marketing:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Customer feedback management:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Referral and word of mouth marketing:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowdy, Extole, RewardStream</td>
<td>Medallia, Forsee, Allegiance, Walker Information</td>
<td>Crowdly, Extole, RewardStream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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New Markets, Delivery Models, And Capabilities Will Drive Growth

We’ve seen some interesting market movement over that past two years, including acquisitions, rebranding, and positioning that includes a commoditization of key features (see Figure 2). As the vendors in this space continue to look for differentiation and face encroaching competition from other types of marketing providers, we expect to see more change in the future. Specifically, we expect loyalty providers to tackle new growth by:

› **Disrupting traditional loyalty delivery models.** We see several SaaS vendors — like CrowdTwist and 500friends, a Merkle Company, taking a page from the disruptor’s handbook and delivering multichannel loyalty capabilities more quickly and at a lower cost. They do trade off some constraints on customization for faster implementation times. To date, we see them getting more attention from user companies, but managing smaller scale programs. We also see vendors that target large organizations investing in on-demand options for their solutions.

› **Taking a global perspective.** Several vendors — especially those that target large organizations — have plans to further expand their reach into international markets. We see them taking a few different approaches to global loyalty, including repackaging their solutions, leveraging relationships gained through acquisition, partnering with local loyalty and marketing agencies, and hiring global sales talent. Brierley+Partners’ recent acquisition by Tokyo-based Nomura Research Institute (NRI) increases its exposure to loyalty opportunities in the Japanese and larger APAC market. And, Epsilon plans to slim down its current solution to meet the business needs of potential clients in developing, but less mature loyalty markets across the globe.

› **Expanding into new markets.** Across verticals and company sizes, loyalty solutions are in demand: enterprise retailers, hotels, and credit card companies look to differentiate their current approach, while utility companies, automotive manufacturers, midsize retailers, and sports teams seek better customer understanding. We see providers responding to this market interest by repackaging existing products and services, investing in partnerships, acquiring talent or technology, and developing new products altogether. For example, Aimia acquired Smart Button in 2013 to address mid-market client requirements. And, Comarch’s recent investment in Thanks Again enhances its offering for clients in the travel vertical, and it is in the process of launching a smart city solution that will enable municipalities to leverage its loyalty management product across government, business, and community stakeholders.

› **Chasing the customer experience opportunity.** Effectively managing complex structured loyalty programs — including currencies, customer identification, offers, and promotions — is table stakes for loyalty providers. But, loyalty goes beyond the program and we are seeing providers develop discreet customer experience and engagement competencies to complement their points and incentives capabilities. Clutch and other mid-market providers help clients reward for experiences, not just transactions. Kobie Marketing launched a CX consulting practice in 2014; And, this link between customer experience and loyalty played a part in the recent management buyout of
For Customer Insights Professionals

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Bond Brand Loyalty from Maritz: Bond has a stated focus on “building loyalty across the customer experience continuum,” while Maritz’s Maritz Motivation Solutions company offers more traditional points-based and incentive programs.10

The Eight Providers That Matter Most And How They Stack Up

Customer Loyalty Vendor Evaluation Overview

To assess the state of the customer loyalty market and see how the vendors stack up against each other, Forrester evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of top customer loyalty vendors.

Evaluation Criteria Target Loyalty Strategy, Management, And Marketing Capabilities

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we developed a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria. We evaluated vendors against 40 criteria, which we grouped into three high-level buckets:

› **Current offering.** Each vendor’s position on the vertical axis of the Forrester Wave graphic indicates the strength of its current loyalty offering. We looked at the strength of each vendor’s products and services against a spectrum of loyalty capabilities, including technology platform capabilities, service delivery capabilities, loyalty strategy design, loyalty management, loyalty marketing, and analytics and measurement.

› **Strategy.** A vendor’s position on the horizontal axis indicates Forrester’s assessment of its strategy and approach to the market. We evaluated and validated each vendor’s vision and road map against customer satisfaction, demonstrated R&D investment, and company performance with respect to client growth, expansion and retention. We also assessed each vendor’s pricing structure and partnership strategy.
Market presence. To determine the size of each vendor’s loyalty business, we evaluated total revenue, year-over-year revenue growth, the size of each vendor’s customer base, and average deal size.

Evaluated Vendors Meet Size And Feature Criteria

Forrester included eight vendors in the assessment of customer loyalty vendors for large organizations: Aimia, Bond Brand Loyalty, Brierley+Partners, Comarch, Epsilon, ICF Olson 1to1, Kobie Marketing, and TIBCO Software. Customer loyalty vendors offer solutions for executing structured — and at times, unstructured — customer loyalty strategies. Each of these vendors (see Figure 3):

- Sells a comprehensive customer loyalty solution. Each vendor included in this Forrester Wave evaluation has a branded proprietary technology platform for loyalty and delivers professional services to support execution. These solutions deliver end-to-end loyalty strategy, management, and marketing support.

- Has a solution suitable for large organizations with complex requirements. At least 50% of the included vendors’ clients are enterprise-level ($1 billion in revenue or more). They focus on large organizations with complex loyalty requirements. These requirements include the ability to deliver loyalty programs at scale, manage numerous integrations with legacy environments, and manage large volumes of member interactions and data.

- Demonstrate the ability to support for the largest loyalty market. The vendors included in this evaluation target clients in multiple industries, including at least retail, financial services, and/or travel and hospitality. More than 20% of their current clients are in North America. We also looked for vendors with strong customer interest from Forrester clients and that compete for similar clients, as per Forrester’s assessment of the competitive landscape.

- Has a product now in general release and in use by at least 15 clients. The vendors we included have a solution that was generally available at the time of data collection with at least three references available for contact.
FIGURE 3 Evaluated Vendors: Vendor Information And Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Date evaluated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aimia</td>
<td>Aimia Loyalty Platform</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond Brand Loyalty (formerly Maritz Loyalty Marketing)</td>
<td>Synapze</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brierley+Partners</td>
<td>Brierley LoyaltyWare</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comarch</td>
<td>Comarch CRM &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epsilon</td>
<td>Agility Loyalty</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobie Marketing</td>
<td>Kobie Alchemy</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICF Olson 1to1</td>
<td>Tally</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIBCO Software</td>
<td>TIBCO Reward</td>
<td>Q4 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vendor selection criteria

- The vendor provides a comprehensive customer loyalty offering. This includes a branded proprietary technology platform for loyalty and professional services.
- The vendor is able to support the largest market for loyalty solutions. This includes targeting clients across 5+ industries including at least retail, financial services, and/or travel and hospitality, with more than 20% of current clients in North America.
- The vendor has a solution that is currently in use by at least 15 clients.
- The vendor demonstrates Forrester client interest through inquiry and competes for similar clients as per Forrester’s assessment of the competitive landscape.
- The vendor has a solution for large organizations with complex requirements and at least 50% of the vendor’s clients are enterprise-level. Requirements include the ability to deliver loyalty programs at scale, manage numerous integrations with legacy environments, and manage large volumes of member interaction data.

Leading Providers Aggressively Jockey For Position

The evaluation uncovered a market in which (see Figure 4):

- Six vendors lead the field. All of the Leaders in this evaluation cater to organizations requiring support for large, complex loyalty programs, and all but one were Leaders in the last edition. From a current offering perspective, they bring mature loyalty strategy, management, and marketing capabilities to the table, and 10+ years of experience in the industry. ICF Olson 1to1 made its way into the Leader category, reflecting its commitment to evolving its approach to loyalty. With
loyalty moving beyond the program, we see table-stakes capabilities like currency management move into active-maintenance mode while vendors strive for differentiation through investments in partnerships, expanding digital capabilities, and customer experience chops.

› **Two vendors offer competitive options.** TIBCO Software’s on-demand loyalty solution offers moderate loyalty management capabilities, but client references indicate that all of the recent changes within the larger organization have negatively impacted account management and support. Comarch, a new entrant into the evaluation this year, brings global loyalty technology experience to the space, but its loyalty services capabilities are only two years old and lack depth offered by some of the leading competitors. Each of these vendors has gaps to fill — client service for TIBCO, and more service-delivery experience for Comarch — to achieve leadership status.

This evaluation of the customer loyalty provider market is intended to be a starting point only. We encourage clients to view detailed product evaluations and adapt criteria weightings to fit their individual needs through the Forrester Wave Excel-based vendor comparison tool.

**FIGURE 4** Forrester Wave™: Customer Loyalty Solutions For Large Organizations, Q4 ’15

Go to Forrester.com to download the Forrester Wave tool for more detailed product evaluations, feature comparisons, and customizable rankings.
### Vendor Profiles

#### Leaders

- **Consider Brierley+Partners if you want one-stop shop for all things loyalty.** Brierley+Partners has 10 loyalty and CRM products and a suite of professional services spanning strategy, program management, consumer insights, research, database services, campaign execution, data warehousing, and fulfillment. It has strong loyalty management and marketing capabilities, and across the board clients praise its account management, strategy design, and digital member engagement capabilities. As one client noted: “They are willing to do whatever it takes to move..."
our program forward.” With its acquisition by NRI fueling expansion into new markets in the US and abroad, it’s clear that Brierley+Partners is operating on all cylinders and showing no signs of slowing down anytime soon.

While client feedback is stellar, and it’s apparent Brierley+Partners has a lot to offer, sometimes more is just more. We’d like to see Brierley+Partners take a step back, reinvest in its user interface (UI) — especially if they plan to expand into the mid-market — and simplify its messaging. Regardless, Brierley+Partners is a good fit for companies looking for a hands-on agency partner with broad loyalty management, marketing, and analytics capabilities.

› **Consider Aimia if you’re looking for global loyalty and analytics support.** Aimia has a vision to make it easier for clients to execute their loyalty strategies, given its recent productization of both its technology and services offering. This repackaging brings more focus and transparency to its offering. Clients also praise Aimia’s account management, reporting that the account teams are responsive, involved, and very easy to work with. From a technology standpoint, Aimia’s Loyalty Platform has strong marketer-friendly tools including powerful analytics.

Client feedback shows that Aimia is making progress on its vision, but it still has work to do, especially when it comes to the depth of its strategic insight and thought leadership. Further, clients on older versions of its technology indicate that there is significant cost associated with upgrading to the new more flexible and feature-rich loyalty platform. However, Aimia remains a good fit for enterprises looking for a responsive, global partner, committed to evolving, albeit slowly, its technology and services capabilities.

› **Consider Kobie Marketing if you value agility and flexibility.** Kobie Marketing uses flexible, scalable loyalty technology, strong integration capabilities, and a very user-friendly interface to compete against the other providers in this space. As one client reference stated, the Florida-based loyalty provider is “extremely well-versed in technologies.” And, we believe it. It has also spent the past few years shoring up its strategic consulting services and launching a customer experience practice. It infuses every client engagement with strategic services, and it shows. Clients consistently commend its proactive approach, management team, and as one client said, “they are one of our most trusted partnerships . . . they definitely bring new ideas to the table.”

Clients indicate that the vendor faces some quality control issues in consistency of execution, and that its industry-specific insights could improve. And while its reporting and dashboarding capabilities are strong, we’d like to see it mature its predictive analytics capabilities. Kobie Marketing is a good fit for companies looking for a well-rounded, nimble, technology-centric partner with self-service tools.

› **Consider Epsilon if you are a large enterprise with complex loyalty requirements.** Epsilon has the most experience in the space handling large-scale programs. Most current clients don’t manage their own programs, but Epsilon demonstrates its commitment to increasing transparency and marketer control by significantly overhauling the interface and building a developer portal. Marketers
across industries will appreciate the expansive nature of Epsilon’s offering and its knowledge of loyalty technology and the market. As one client stated, “They marry the two and look into the future.” In step with Forrester’s vision of loyalty beyond the program, Epsilon’s road map looks to further integrate its loyalty capabilities with its total set of marketing solutions to provide more useful customer insights and extend marketers’ reach and recognition of loyal customers.

But Epsilon’s current capabilities lag behind its vision and clients indicate that integration with third-party providers is stickier and more expensive than expected. Clients would like to see Epsilon be more innovative with leading-edge technologies and ideas. Marketers with large, complex loyalty programs and budget to match will find an experienced and reliable loyalty partner in Epsilon.

› Consider Bond Brand Loyalty if you’re pursuing alternatives to structured loyalty. One year into its rebranding, Bond Brand Loyalty is living up to its stated focus on formal and informal ways to recognize, realize, and reward loyalty. This vendor offers both programmatic and brand loyalty services, including financial modeling, research, customer experience design, and creative services. As one client stated, “They talked about how to reach the hearts and minds of clients and it was . . . those softer aspects that won us over.” Bond Brand Loyalty has some of the strongest frameworks and methodologies guiding its strategic services in the market, and it’s clear — based on its high rate of new customer acquisition and account expansion — that its message is resonating with clients.

For all the thought leadership and vision that Bond Brand Loyalty brings to the market, its execution could use some polish. It has invested a lot in the Synapze platform over the past few years, but it still has some limitations around marketing automation and analytics. One client told us they wished Bond Brand Loyalty would “spend more time testing aspects of the solution [during implementation].” But enterprises — especially retail, banking, and manufacturing companies — will appreciate the vendor’s holistic and methodological approach to loyalty.

› Consider ICF Olson 1to1 if creative capabilities and culture are key selection factors. ICF Olson 1to1 brings marketing and technology chops, a trademarked “anthropological” approach, and a little dash of “Minnesota nice” to the loyalty space. While its Tally platform isn’t the most cutting-edge platform available, ICF Olson 1to1 customers commend its ease of use and analytics capabilities. But above all, according to clients, the best thing about working with ICF Olson 1to1 is how knowledgeable, involved, and easy to work with the people are. As one client stated, “Something they bring to the table that I’ve never had with another partner is a heartfelt commitment to our success.”

For such a client-focused firm, the clients we spoke with would like to see it bring more proactive strategic thinking and innovative ideas to the table. If you’re a loyalty marketer or customer insights professional looking for an agency partner with loyalty experience, proven technology, and strong creative capabilities, add ICF Olson 1to1 to your shortlist.
Strong Performers

› **Consider Comarch if technology discipline is your top priority.** Client references praise this vendor’s sweet spot: As a technology provider. Krakow-based Comarch certainly brings strong loyalty management capabilities to the market through its products and experience managing large partner programs for airlines, travel, and oil and gas companies. Clients are very satisfied with Comarch’s value and call out the ease of technology implementation and industry expertise. As one client said: “We really liked that they could . . . adapt to the uniqueness of our business.”

While its heritage in technology is clear, Comarch’s services capabilities are green, developed in the past two years. As a result, Comarch doesn’t have as strong of a reputation as a strategic services partner. One client said that initial communication with the account teams was challenging. Another point of consideration: Comarch strives to develop all capabilities internally rather than partner with third-party providers, which leads to some latency around adoption of leading-edge technologies like mobile. Organizations with complex requirements or large partner programs will find Comarch a strong and disciplined technology partner. For now, those looking for a consultative-led approach may find other providers in this evaluation more suitable.

› **Wait for TIBCO Software if you want out-of-the-box loyalty at a lower total cost.** TIBCO has gone through significant changes over the past year and a half: A private equity firm acquired the TIBCO business and completely restructured the organization, including rebranding TIBCO Loyalty Lab as TIBCO Software. The core offering — an out-of-the-box loyalty platform for enterprises in retail and other industries looking for self-service loyalty management with little customization and a lower total cost of ownership — hasn’t changed much in the wake of the acquisition, aside from further incorporation of other TIBCO solutions like Spotfire and Jaspersoft. Overall, the solution offers moderate capabilities and a clean program management user interface.

While the management team is confident that TIBCO is now on a path to growth, the client feedback we got paints a less rosy portrait. Its strategic pivots and staff turnover left some clients feeling under supported. They pointed to breakdowns in communications with account teams, lack of strategic assistance, and issues with basic program execution. One client said, “We have unresolved issues dating back to February [2015], and [Reward] struggles to do the basic transactions we require of a loyalty system.” We think TIBCO Software has potential for retailers, but given uneven client feedback, we advise prospects to proceed with caution.
Supplemental Material

Online Resource

The online version of Figure 4 is an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

Data Sources Used In This Forrester Wave

Forrester used a combination of three data sources to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each solution:

- **Vendor surveys.** Forrester surveyed vendors on their capabilities as they relate to the evaluation criteria. Once we analyzed the completed vendor surveys, we conducted vendor calls where necessary to gather details of vendor qualifications.

- **Executive briefings and solution demos.** We asked vendors to present their strategy, vision, and road map for their customer loyalty solutions. We also asked for demonstrations of their product’s functionality based on a demo scenario created by Forrester. We used findings from these product demos to validate details of each vendor’s product and service capabilities.
Customer reference calls and surveys. To validate vendor offerings and qualifications, Forrester also conducted reference calls and an online survey with at least three of each vendor’s current customers.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don’t fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and we encourage readers to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve. For more information on the methodology that every Forrester Wave follows, go to http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/forrester-wave-methodology.html.

Integrity Policy

All of Forrester’s research, including Forrester Wave evaluations, is conducted according to our Integrity Policy. For more information, go to http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/integrity-policy.html.

Survey Methodology

Forrester’s Global Business Technographics® Marketing Survey, 2015, was fielded to 1,039 marketing decision-makers located in Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, the UK, and the US from SMB and enterprise companies with 100 or more employees (in Brazil, China, India) or 500 or more employees (in Canada, France, Germany, the UK, and the US). This survey is part of Forrester’s Business Technographics and was fielded from May 2015 to August 2015. ResearchNow fielded this survey on behalf of Forrester. Survey respondent incentives include points redeemable for gift certificates. We have provided exact sample sizes in this report on a question-by-question basis.
Forrester’s Business Technographics provides demand-side insight into the priorities, investments, and customer journeys of business and technology decision-makers and the workforce across the globe. Forrester collects data insights from qualified respondents in 10 countries spanning the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Business Technographics uses only superior data sources and advanced data-cleaning techniques to ensure the highest data quality.

Endnotes

1 The age of the customer is real and here to stay. To better understand the urgency around transforming your company into one that is customer obsessed, see the “Winning In The Age Of The Customer” Forrester report.


4 In the last loyalty Forrester Wave evaluation, we highlighted the importance of technology and acknowledged that all of the providers, even those who traditionally focused on custom-built solutions, were moving towards proprietary configurable platforms. We see this trend continuing.

5 For the top seven customer loyalty solutions suitable for midsize organizations, see the “The Forrester Wave: Customer Loyalty Solutions For Midsize Organizations, Q1 2016” Forrester report.


9 Companies that really want to compete for their customers’ loyalty need an evolved approach that extends beyond a loyalty program designed around points and rewards. See the “Be A Loyalty Company, Not A Company With A Loyalty Program” Forrester report.


11 We see loyalty breaking out into two — often overlapping — loyalty strategies: structured initiatives center on explicit membership while unstructured initiatives originate in various departments and identify loyalty as an outcome. See the “Navigate The Complex Customer Loyalty Ecosystem” Forrester report.

We work with business and technology leaders to develop customer-obsessed strategies that drive growth.

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